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DEFENSE COMBAT



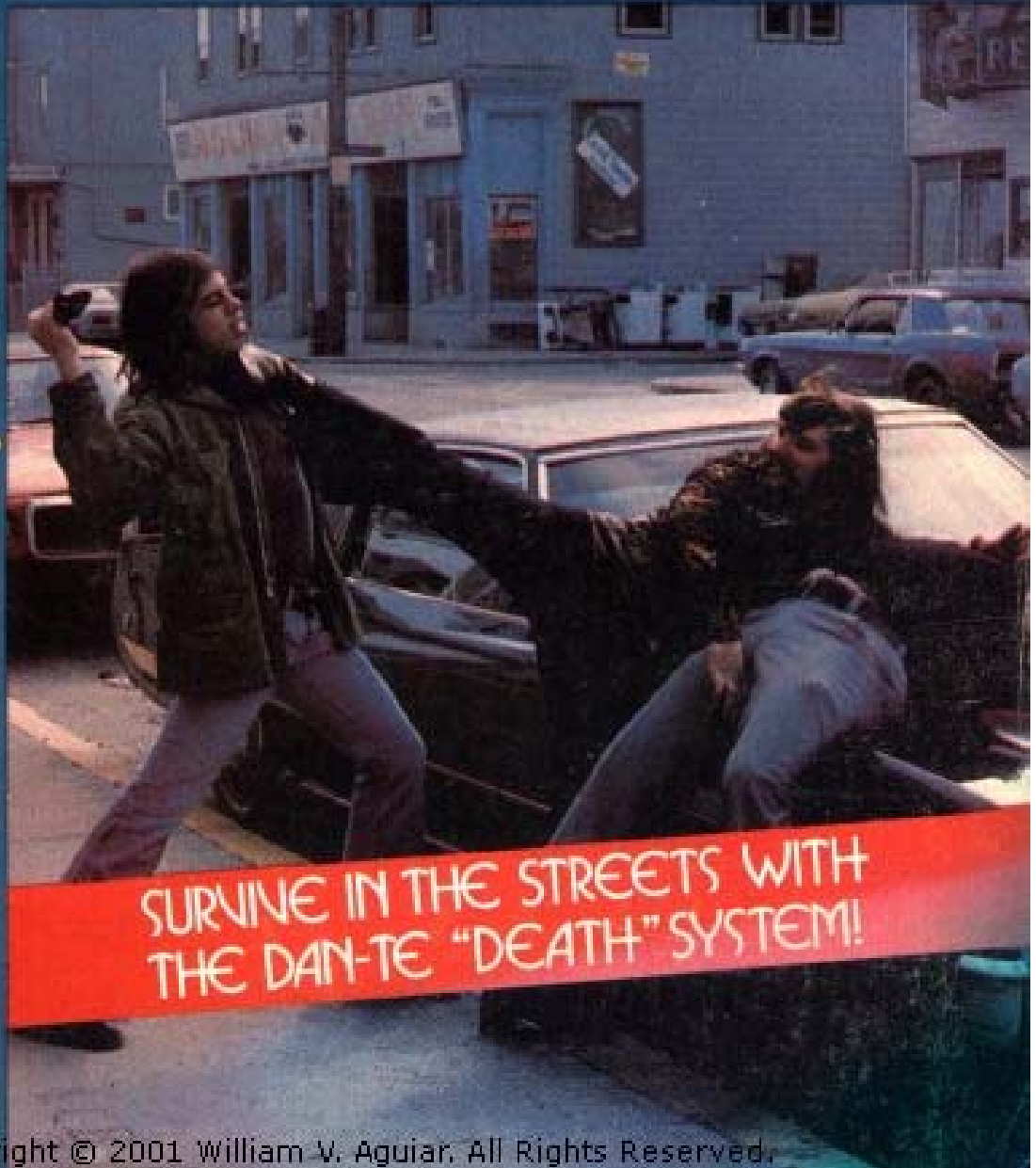
OCTOBER 1976

TRUE ADVENTURE **RON (THE BLACK DRAGON)**
VAN CLIEF vs EIGHT THUGS!

SAVATE: FROM
SEWER TO
STYLIZED SPORT

TV'S STAN
BROCK TAKES
TAEKWONDO
INTO THE
"WILD KINGDOM!"

PRO KARATE'S
FRED MILLER
DEMONSTRATES
HIS SPINNING
BACK KICK



SURVIVE IN THE STREETS WITH
THE DAN-TE "DEATH" SYSTEM!



EDITORIAL

In keeping with our policy of bringing you the exciting and the controversial (not necessarily synonymous), we have devoted our exciting *Survival in the Streets* sequence to the controversial Dan-te System of Self Defense. I would like, then, to devote this editorial as an explanation of sorts.

Bill Aguiar, as many of you must know by now, occupies the throne of the late Count Dante's martial arts empire. It belongs to him, then, to either continue the Dante philosophy of the so-called "Death System," or reject it. He has obviously elected to continue it. His reasoning will be sound to some, appalling to others.

I interviewed Bill at his dojo in Fall River, Mass., my own hometown, as a matter of fact. I'm familiar, then, with the scene, the atmosphere, the bars and the people there, especially in the "Flint" section where I was born and grew up. It was at one time considered to be the toughest part of town ... still is, as far as I can determine. There were gangs, motorcycles, black leather, chains, multi-stranded whipping cables, broken beer bottles, cue sticks, knives, guns ... and an occasional fist! Your normal run-of-the-mill "tough" section.

The Flint section is not really unique; each city has its own, each inhabitant thinks his is the worst, their fighters the meanest, their weapons the ugliest. This is not to draw comparisons, because to my way of thinking, the winner is the loser in this case. There's no glory to be gained in being the cruelest person or the ugliest place in the world.

The defenses Bill Aguiar has illustrated for us here are devised specifically for this kind of situation. This is not Wall Street or safe Suburbia, U.S.A. where a slap in the face or a punch in the nose between "sporting gentleman" will end an argument. On Wall Street the combatants can be considered "civilized" as it were, mature, adult in their reasoning. The fight itself might well have been a temporary loss of control over what are usually well-controlled emotions. The slap or the single punch is generally enough to jar the reluctant fighters back into their conservative reality.

But in the barroom, in the "tough" section of the city, in the world of beer bottles and head-crushing cue balls, there is no such restraint. There is no reasoning behind the attack,

no warning, not let-up once started. "If I don't kill him, Herman," one denizen of this deep told me while explaining his earlier mutilation of a man in a bar, "he's going to kill me. If I let him up he's going to try again. So I gotta break his arm, I gotta rip his eye out. That way he's going to remember not to mess with me again."

Fighting in a bar of this description, chances are excellent that you'll never fight just one-on-one. It may start out that way, but long before a second punch can be thrown, before a retaliatory blow can be dealt, there will be half-a-dozen "friends" piling on. The prospect of a bottle being shattered on your unsuspecting head, a cue stick being stabbed into your unguarded stomach, a cue ball being crushed down onto your skull, is very high. You can virtually depend on it!

So why go in that bar in the first place? Well, mine is not to reason why people stick their heads into the cannon's mouth. Mine is to offer you the opportunity, once inside the bar, to get yourself out of there, hopefully in one piece. These bars exist, these situations are very real — and a very real defense is necessary in order to survive. I personally do not advocate the "murder and mutilate" philosophy of Bill Aguiar and his Dan-te "Death System." I don't think, as the man said, it's necessary to permanently blind or otherwise cripple a man for the insult he spoke or the punch he threw. It's too high a price to pay for a lesson learned. And I personally don't see where the violence, the overkill he advocates, is going to prevent the man — or his half dozen friends — from coming back to try again, with more formidable weapons, more than likely. Revenge, in this circumstance, is foremost in the wounded animal's mind. Even death won't stop the chain reaction, because if he is unable to retaliate, his "friends" or his "gang" will. So-called "honor" is at stake. It starts with a stick, goes to a club, then a knife, a gun, a cannon, a bomb ... and God only knows what next!

But there is crime in the streets, brawling in the bars, and until we come up with a better system of prevention, we need a defense against it. Here, then, is Bill Aguiar's version. Take it or leave it.

HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE STREETS WITH: THE DAN-TE "DEATH SYSTEM"

If there's one thing you can always associate with the name Dante, or in this case, Dan-te, it's controversy. And while many may disagree with the extremes to which these controversial techniques are carried out, few will argue over their overall effectiveness.

Prior to his death, Count Dante turned over to his friend and protege, Bill Aguiar, his uniform, red sash and other personal belongings, establishing Bill as successor to the throne of his martial arts empire. For all intents and purposes, Bill Aguiar, who is inclined to quote, if not parrot, the late Count Dante at every opportunity, continues in his controversial footsteps.

Born and schooled in Fall River, Mass., Bill described himself as a "middle of - the - roader" when it came to troubles with the law in his youth. "Basically I was more with the hoodlum element when I was a kid," he admitted candidly. "But I wouldn't say I was super aggressive. I wasn't into robbing cars or any of that ... just petty stuff that you figure you can get away with at that age. I mean, I never went home from school with my arms stacked with books

either; I didn't play a musical instrument. Where I come from (the tough "Flint" section of Fall River), kids who carried violins almost always had them broken over their heads..."

Aguiar played a little football while in high school, but quit before the actual season began in order to devote more time to his judo training. At 13 he was into man - to - man sports, like boxing, wrestling, etc., but because of a lack of quality instructors, and having already read as many self-defense books he could find, including the redoubtable Bruce Tegner ("Everyone read Bruce Tegner!" Bill shouts), he moved into judo.

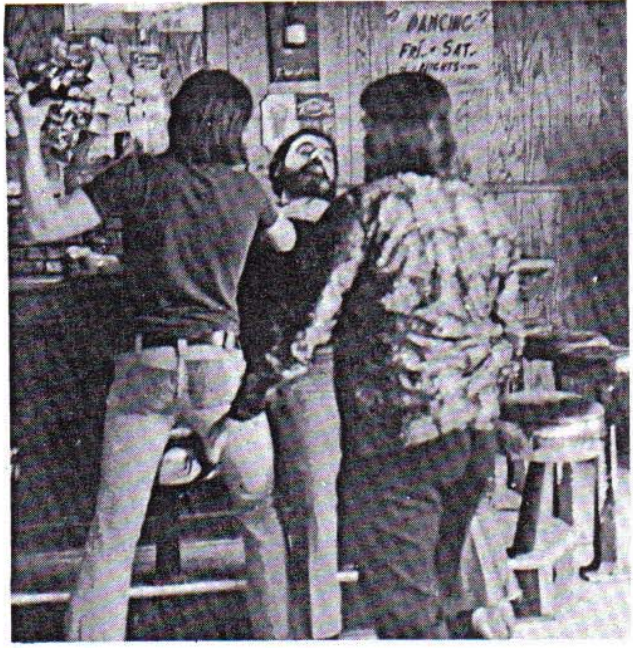
Of course, judo in those days was much different from what we know it as today. There were very few instructors around, and few of those held high rank. Aguiar himself studied under a 2nd-degree brown belt in the beginning. "In those days," he remembered, "you trained with whoever was around. Training in the martial arts then was very difficult (to come by). There were a lot of Navy men from Newport, R.I., karateists who'd come in with different styles...

It's a philosophy of "murder and mutilate" that will turn the stomachs of some, capture the interest of others. One thing it will do, however, is help you survive in the streets!

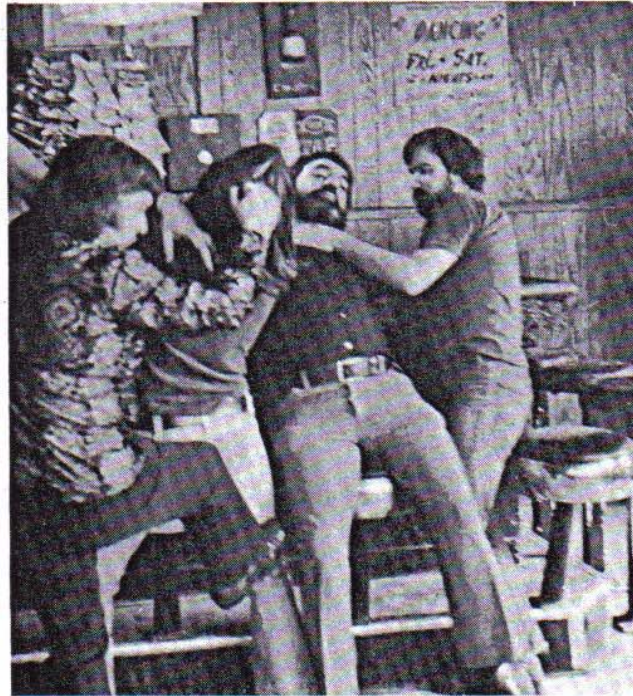
By Herman Petras



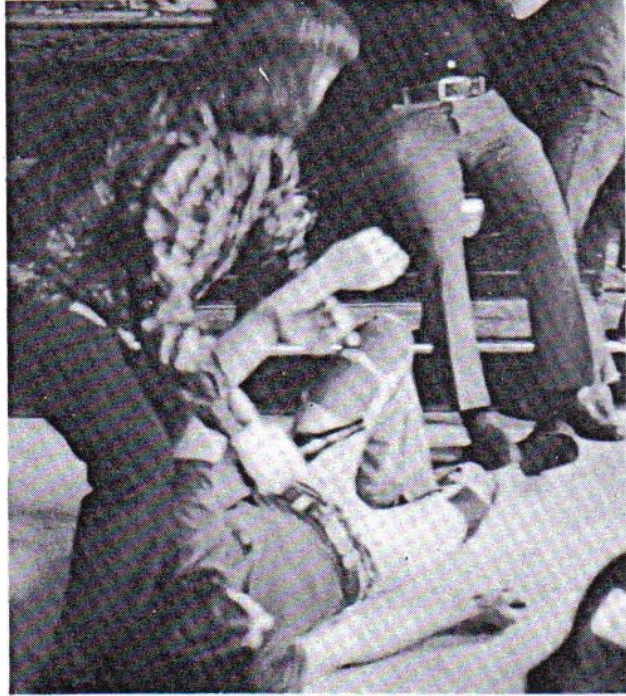
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HELPING A FRIEND

In this sequence, Bill Aguiar rushes to the defense of his friend, Bill Hallal, who has been sitting and minding his own business. As mentioned, an attack can come from anywhere, at any time without warning — and it's often multiple. This attack comes from behind and to one side of Bill (1), as Aguiar moves in to help (2). The most dangerous opponent is the one with the upraised beer bottle. Bill swiftly traps the arm with a single wing lock and grabs the man's hair (3). Stomping the crook of the man's knee to break his balance, Aguiar pulls him backward (4) and down, making sure he smashes his head to the floor (5). Aguiar then takes the bottle from the fallen attacker and stomps on his groin as he heads for the other guy (6). Repeated strikes on the attacker's elbow either breaks the joint and/or forces the man to release his choke hold (7).

Twisting the weakened arm behind him, Bill grabs the hair of his opponent (8), then drives a hard Fork Hand into the exposed throat (9). Grabbing the larynx (not the tough neck muscles) with his left hand, Aguiar's right hand forces the man's face away as the left hand twists and rips in the opposite direction at the larynx (10). Bill then reaches his left hand around to hold the man's head fast while the right elbow is driven into the joint where the jawbone connects near the ear, breaking it (11). Grabbing the larynx and nape of the neck once again (12), Bill smashes the man's face onto a nearby table (13), then stomps the fallen figure in the groin for the finishing technique.

Again, it must be noted that these techniques are meant to mutilate, and quite possibly kill. We at DEFENSE COMBAT do not advocate the extremity of these measures. We show them as Bill Aguiar teaches them. They are not to be construed as instruction by the readers of this magazine.



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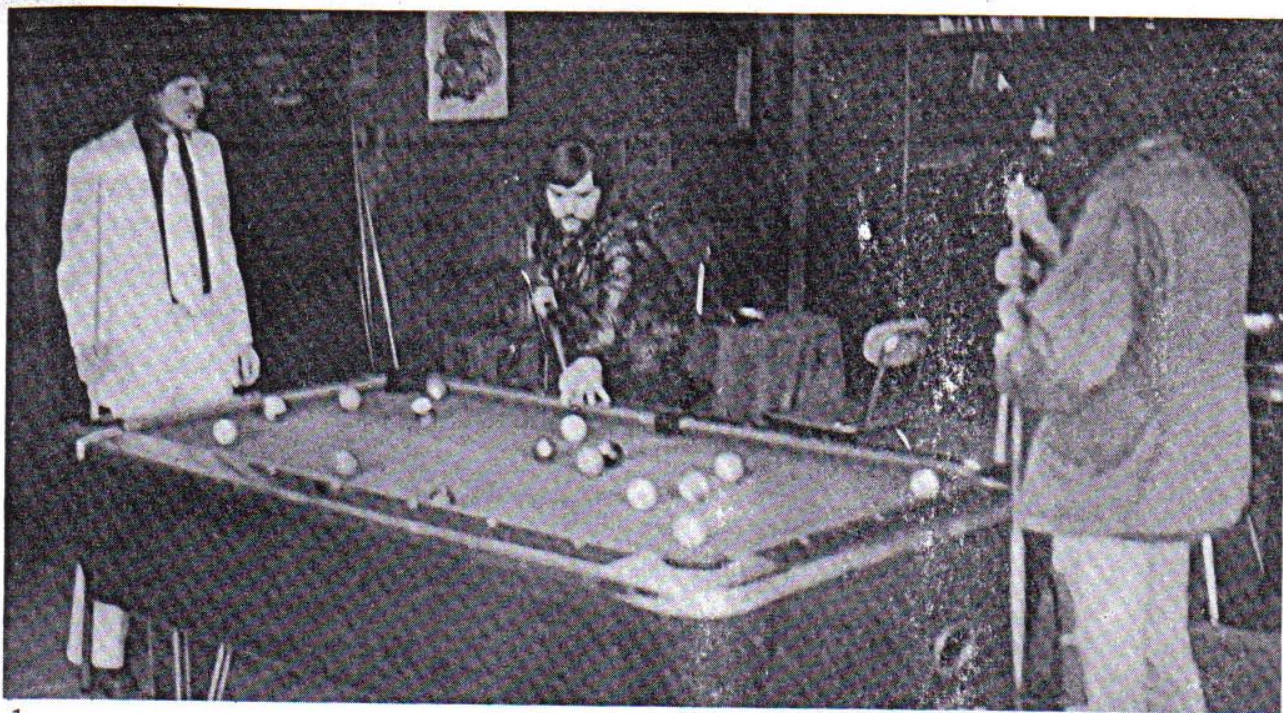
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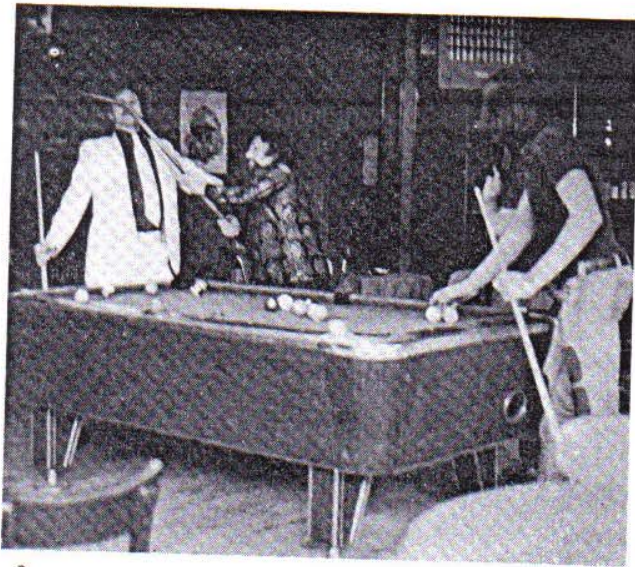
DEFENSE AT THE POOL TABLE

In this sequence, Bill Aguiar uses modern - day weapons the way farmers, peasants and various "empty - handed" people in martial arts history took up arms they were familiar with (pitchforks, hoes, bo staves, etc.) in order to ward off attacking samurai.

A dispute during a "friendly" game of pool suddenly erupts (1) with the man to Bill's right reaching out to grab and pull him down (2). Bill's immediate reaction is to swing out with his cue stick (holding the thick end), slashing the thinner portion across the attacker's face (3). (Most inexperienced fighters will grab the thin end of the cue stick and swing the other, but if the cue stick breaks, it will leave the defender with only a stump; by holding the thick end, when the whip-like action and contact with the opponent causes it to break, the defender still has a long and very lethal weapon.) The force of the strike, plus the ripping damage over eyes and nose, puts the first man out of commission. In quick reflex action, Aguiar steps into the second man's attack, parrying his

weapon arm and lunging forward with the jagged end of the cue stick into the soft hollow of the throat (4). That man disposed of, Bill rushes right into the third attacker who is looking to crown him with a billiard ball.

Bill blocks upward and out, stomping with his left foot down the man's shin and onto his instep. His cue stick is poised to lash out across the lower pelvis and groin area (5), a stinging situation if ever there was one! Quickly, Bill thrusts into the man's groin with his broken cue stick (6). The Devil's Hand (a grab and hold technique) is applied to the man's neck, forcing his face down while the cue stick is once more jammed into the stomach (7). His head now rammed down onto the edge of the pool table, Bill finishes him off with a knee to the midsection and a crushing blow with the blunt end of the cue stick (8). It should be noted by the reader that, throughout, each opponent was dealt a blow that prevented his getting up again to add more pressure. That, coupled with Bill's swift reaction, allowed him to concentrate on one man at a time.



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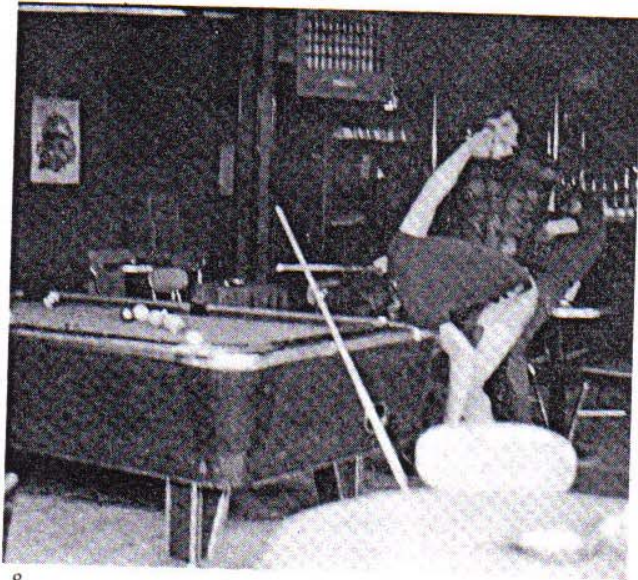
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that what he said made sense. If he had just come out of nowhere, just some guy mouthing off, someone who wasn't one of the biggest names in the country at the time, well, I might have thought, Here's a guy who's just hiding his own inadequacies — you know what I mean...?"

But that wasn't the case. Dante was big — controversial, no doubt — but the man who brought recognition to the midwest karate scene with his tournament winning students. According to Bill, it didn't matter to Dante if you were a boxer, a wrestler or whatever; you wanted to train, Dante trained you, and with no emphasis on rank. You could wear any color belt you wanted, but on the mat you had better be able to back that belt up! That's all that counted.

While studying with Dante, Aguiar was teaching self-defense at a YMCA and at a college in nearby Newport, R.I. Like most other instructors of the period, Bill taught mostly because he needed a place to train and someone to work out with. It certainly wasn't for the "pay" because paid instructors then were about as rare as nudists in Iceland.

Aguiar opened his first school in 1967 when he was 19. He quickly signed up some 40 - or - so students. At 24 he moved to larger quarters on Rock Street in Fall River. People from all over the immediate area began coming to him, causing him to move once more to larger and more accommodating facilities at 432 Durfee Street, Fall River, Mass. (he owns the building) where he currently teaches. "I only wish I could say that they were coming because I was teaching a good street style," Bill confesses openly, "but I have to be perfectly honest with you; they were coming because I advertised on TV. They were passing 50 other schools to come to me. But they stayed!

The only reason I eventually opened the other two schools (one in Taunton, the other in New Bedford, Mass.) was because of the gas crisis. It made a big difference. People didn't want to drive three times a week to drop their kids off here when there might have been a school near them. So I opened schools there. I don't need 25 schools. I'm not trying to be a Tracy (system of franchises), because I know how difficult it is to work with karate people. There's too much ego involved. I like to control my schools myself.

"The style we teach we call Dan-

te," Bill explained. "But the Dan-te style has no connection with Count Dante's name," he insists. "In Chicago, Dante used to call his style fuck - 'em - up - waza! At that time he was the biggest ball-buster that ever lived, and everything was 'waza' in those days, meaning 'technique.' Only last year I actually forced him ... I said, 'C'mon, you've got to get something straight. You're preaching this, you're preaching that ... in order for people to relate to it, you've got to coin a term for it.' So he called it Dan-te (expert or graded hand), and it's still basically a mixture of various styles. It's not a karate style ... when I say this, I'm not knocking karate or other styles. The style is not made for tournament competition. I've trained students for no-contact tournaments over the years — and they'd do good if I concentrated on that, on tournament competition. But it seems like my students are more effective on the streets. So I didn't push tournaments ... I'd rather train a man strictly for the streets ... there should be some schools that still do that. This isn't a sport karate school; it's a *survival* school. Hell, what's karate? It's a blanket term. It means 'empty hand.' It could be a boxer, a karate man, anyone — you know what I mean? You're just saying 'empty hand' in another language."

Bill's own instruction of self-defense in his dojo is two-fold. The first portion is general in martial arts nature; the second, depending on the desire of the individual student, is the introduction to Dan-te.

"A normal karate workout," Bill says of his first lessons for beginning students. "For instance, horse stances, punching, blocks ... many of the things, let's say, we would speak of that aren't effective. They're effective, but not in and of itself. In other words, you get a student who doesn't even know how to close his fist, or doesn't know how to lift his leg ... you've got to train him in something. So we train him in basic karate techniques. But when people say, 'You teach karate, you teach atewaza' ... well, if a guy has a style and all of a sudden he changes it in order to teach for the street, he isn't really teaching a style. I mean, there isn't much difference between a goju front kick and a taekwondo front kick; if you get it in the balls, both men are going down! It's only how the combinations are put together in a particular kata that make the difference. It's like kempo — now I could say our

system is chuan fa kempo (which I usually do when students start), but how far back does kempo go? You can find 29 different types of kempo factions in this country. There's kempo this and kempo that ... you know, I really dig when people say I'm teaching hap gar 5,000 - year - old kung-fu style the way it was done then ... *who the hell knows!* Look, this is a self-defense school. I teach basic karate, basic sparring, just like the normal karate schools; we have judo classes, a lot of practical application, grabs, chokes, things along that line. Then, from there, we can see who wants to go in all the way. The stuff I'm talking about in the Dan-te system is not pushed on everybody that comes in here. It's the building of a frame of mind — and certain hand techniques at the end."

Asked what, basically, separates the Dan-te style from others, Aguiar said: "Nothing. Nothing at all. It isn't the techniques of the system, it's the *attitude* — and that is a 7 - to - 10 - second drive to the wall; completely going in for one thing and one thing only in mind — to get the opponent down and out, and everything over as quickly as possible. This is why many of my men will completely rip apart somebody in the street in just a drive, bang, bang, bang, BOOM! You make a 3-minute or a 6-minute match out of it, they're gonna lose. It's the difference between training for a sprint or for the Boston Marathon. Our philosophy is coming in at full speed to mutilate and kill! It's like this: a street fight is something quick, it doesn't last 11 minutes. A fight in the street is one jam. People don't break it up into rounds, you know. This way, in a no - holds - barred type of competition my students would win."

Asked what specifically his students would drive for in a fight, Bill said: "Groin, eyes, throat, things alone that line."

You mean you'd gouge someone's eyes out?

"Yes, definitely!"

Isn't that overkill?

"Yes, it is. Look, if you're gonna swing, you either do that, go in all the way, or don't do anything at all. I'm not advocating fighting at the drop of a hat, but when you gotta go, you gotta go. I mean, it doesn't take much for you to throw a kick and try to pull it so you don't hurt somebody bad, and then the guy catches your leg and

(Continued on page 54)

SURVIVE IN THE STREETS

(Continued from page 36)

knocks you down — your head hits the curbstone and now you've got a widow! The streets are pretty bad. Mutilate and kill, that's our philosophy — if you're wrong you can always say you're sorry!"

Asked at what point his students decide when to fight, that is, how much will they absorb before retaliating with the "mutilate and murder" philosophy, Bill said: "Let me put it this way. The training doesn't get tougher and tougher until you start pressing the students to see if they can take it or not. There are certain students where you can tell by the attitude in class, in sparring, where one guy goes down and the other won't go down after him, or one student goes down and you have to pull the other one off him! It's that type of thing. I'm not here to change anybody's morals. In other words, they can train up to a certain point and say, 'This is enough for me.' It all depends on the individual (whether or not he's going to kill or learn to kill). There are some people who are vicious, brutal. Good karateist can kill, but it's a mental attitude that separates my philosophy and theirs. Both have the equipment, the techniques, but only some have the mental attitude."

There are tough sections of cities all over the world, areas where even fools wouldn't dare to tread, and Fall River's "Flint" section is no exception. Someone once took a friend of mine to a midwestern bar and said it was the toughest place he'd ever been in. The friend said it was "gay" by comparison to some of the "tough" bars in New York. Well, there are some bars, some attitudes, some mutilate and murder mentalities in Fall River bars that make New York's "tough" places *kindergarten* by comparison!

Reality, to Bill Aguiar, is the most important perspective in a life-and-death struggle. His reality is different from others, just as his personal life style is different. And his approach to reality is dictated by the one he sees more often than not, his environment, the one that surrounds him wherever he goes. Bill's not interested in what he calls the "ballet-like" kicks and moves of various karate styles. They look good, he says, but ballet, for its own sake, belongs on the stage, not the street.

The street is real; the stage is not. The "tough" bars of the world are Bill's reality, and his approach to it is a gut-level reaction. It's more than a jungle where the strong survive and the weak do not. In the jungle you can approximate when and where — and why — an animal will attack. In Aguiar's jungle, there is no such advantage. The attack can come from anywhere, at any time, and for no apparent reason whatever. To be on guard at all times is a way of life there. If you're not prepared, you're dead — or mutilated. It's as basic as that!

The photo sequences were shot by Bill Aguiar's associate, John Creeden, at Bill Hallal's bar called *The Magic Mushroom* in Fall River, Mass.

TRUE ADVENTURE

(Continued from page 20)

with his wife. Who the hell was his wife? Ron didn't have to ask. The man informed Van Clief that it was the woman he was sitting next to.

In this condition there was little Van Clief could offer in the way of a reasonable explanation. It wasn't likely the man was going to listen. "It is a good thing I remained in control," Van Clief remembers.

Ron noticed that the bartender was standing only a few feet away. Almost matter-of-factly, he told the bartender to get this man a beer. The man looked towards the bartender for a moment. That was all the time Van Clief needed. Immediately, Ron grabbed his wrist, forcing him to release the gun. Ron followed up with a back kick to the stomach and a sweep, dropping him to the floor.

It is an understatement when Van Clief says that martial arts "was very helpful on occasions."

As a policeman and a private citizen, one of the things that has always bothered Van Clief is the matter of gun control. He is completely against anyone owning a handgun. There is simply no need for it, he says.

It is true that the gun is a great equalizer, but it is also a terribly convenient agent for murder. In New York City alone, says Van Clief, there are at least 400,000 handguns in the hands of people. And while a gun is somewhat difficult to obtain in New York, there are some states where it is as easy to buy a gun as it is a stick of chewing gum.

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